

**PROMOTING CULTURAL AWARENESS IN EFL TEN GRADE CLASSROOM
FROM A PUBLIC SCHOOL**

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A PUBLIC SCHOOL**

Trabajo como requisito de grado para optar por el título de Licenciadas en Bilingüismo con
énfasis en inglés

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TABLE OF CONTENT

ABSTRACT	v
1. JUSTIFICATION	1
2.1 OBJECTIVES	7
2.1.1 Teaching objectives:	7
2.1.2 Learning objectives	8
3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	8
3.1 Lit. Review	8
3.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	11
3.2.1 What is culture?	11
3.2.2 The importance of culture	12
3.2.3 What is cultural awareness?	13
3.2.4 Advantages of teaching culture	14
3.2.5 How to teach culture?	15
3.2.6 How to teach culture in the classroom?	16
4. METHODOLOGY	17
4.1 Type of practicum	17
4.2 Context and Setting	17
4.3 Participants	19
4.3.1 Students	19
4.3.2 Pre-service Teachers	19
4.4 Reflection instruments	20
4.4.1 Observation	20
4.4.2 Journals	20
4.4.3 Students Artifacts	21
4.5 Instructional Design	21
5. RESULTS	23
5.1 Students' responses	23
5.1.1 Identifying stereotypes	23
5.1.2 Student's role through the implementation	24
5.1.3 Promoting debates with their peers	26
5.1.4 Motivation	27
5.1.5 Student's previous knowledge	29

5.2 Professional growth	30
5.2.1 Material design	30
5.2.2 Providing rapport	31
5.2.3 Teaching strategies	32
5.2.4 New knowledge	33
5.2.5 Teachers role	34
5.2.6 Recognition of students' needs	36
5.3 Linguistic outcomes	37
5.3.1 Role plays.	37
5.3.2 Cultural knowledge in written outcomes	39
6. Limitations of the project	43
7. Pedagogical implications	43
8. Conclusions	44
References	46

ABSTRACT

The goal of the classroom project is to promote a sense of consciousness in regards of culture within Colombian classrooms. The participants will look at how to use 8 different cultures in order to contextualize students as much as they can into the world's situation. The pre-service teachers will use text, videos, and situations to introduce Korean, Canadian, Mexican, Colombian, Indian, Japanese, Australian, and Peruvian cultures, we decided to focus in these cultures because it is not only important to know about English-speaking cultures, but also to focus on whole different cultures to compare and contrast. The center of our lessons will be groups' discussions so that the students can analyze their classmate's opinions and form their own perspectives through listening and speaking. At the end, the learners will be able to give and share opinions regarding cultures with their partners.

Key Words: Intercultural communicative competence, groups discussions, culture.

El objetivo del proyecto de aula es promover un sentido de conciencia con respecto a la cultura dentro de las aulas Colombianas. Las facilitadoras emplearán 8 culturas diferentes para contextualizar a los estudiantes sobre las diferencias mundiales. Los practicantes utilizarán textos, videos y situaciones para presentar las culturas Coreana, Canadiense, Mexicana, Colombiana, India, Japonesa, Australiana y Peruana. Fue decidido centrarse en estas culturas porque no solo es importante saber el inglés, si no también enfocarse en

culturas completamente diferentes para comparar y contrastar y lo más importante, entender. El centro de estas lecciones serán las discusiones grupales para que los estudiantes puedan analizar las opiniones de sus compañeros y formen sus propias perspectivas a través de la escucha y el habla. Al final, los alumnos podrán dar y compartir opiniones sobre culturas con sus compañeros.

Palabras Claves: Competencia comunicativa intercultural, discusiones grupales, cultura.

1. JUSTIFICATION

It is well known that what distinguishes countries and people from one and another is the uniqueness of their cultures. Consequently, it is easy to infer that culture should not be isolated from education. According to Hamers and Blanc (1995) quoted by Hernández and Samacá (2006) Living within the same community helps people to define themselves in relation to their roles in that community. The statement made by the authors makes easy to infer that there is a need to reinforce learners' knowledge about their native culture and it is necessary for them to get to find their role within their respective communities.

The main problem that this classroom project intends to approach is the lack of awareness Colombian students has regarding culture inside and outside their culture. According to Costalas (2009) Colombian classrooms do not incorporate the intercultural communicative competence in their classes when teaching a foreign language which can cause intercultural misunderstandings between students and foreigners or even between students of the same country. As the author stated in the article, Colombia is divided between high and low social classes, those who belong to a high status have more opportunities to interact or to be exposed to foreign cultures, which is not likely to happen in low social status. Costalas (2009) exposes the misinterpretations between Colombians and North Americans because of the different communicational styles; she also explained that North Americans avoid talking about their personal life that is why they converse about the weather, sports, jobs, or even political issues with people they hardly know while Colombians are totally different. They tend to immediately ask for personal information like age, weight, and salary which is considered normal in Colombia. These kind of communication breakdowns are what this classroom project aims to prevent to successfully communicate with people from around the world. Additionally, the project's goal is for the students to

understand how essential intercultural communication is even if they do not leave the country. Intercultural communication competence (ICC) needs to be implemented in Colombia due to the lack of knowledge people here in this country have of other cultures. Colombian citizens tend to be self-focus on their values, needs, and behaviors, without even thinking on the possibility of other customs being acceptable.

To successfully implement intercultural communicative competence (ICC), it is relevant to know where the term ICC comes from and how important it has been in education, for that reason, the history needs to be covered to fully understand what is it and where it comes from. To begin with, go back to the beginning, the North American anthropologist Hall (1959) used the term "Intercultural Communication" for the first time in his book *The Silent Language*. However, the Britannic linguist Michael Byram born in November the 19 of 1946 is the one who developed a 5-level model for the intercultural communicative competence of language teachers. The "*Model of Intercultural Communicative Competence (ICC)*" (1997) is currently used in the didactics of specialists. Furthermore, Byram and Phipps (2005) explained that the entire goal of the series is to publish books which will ultimately apprise learning and teaching, but whose aim is the analysis of intercultural relationships.

On the other hand, in the *Common European framework of reference for languages: learning, teaching, assessment* it is also mentioned the importance of the intercultural communicative competence among the skills that each individual should develop to properly achieve a high level in the target language. The framework is used as guidance for teachers and students for the learning of a target language, it is divided into chapters. The one that we want to cover *the user/learner's competences* which is separated into subtopics. There it says that understanding the similarities and differences between the native and target culture generates an intercultural awareness, this awareness covers consciousness of the regional and

social variety in the cultures addressed (8 cultures in total). In additions, it is also enriched by awareness of other cultures than the native and the target ones which helps to understand each community from the prospect of others. The information given by the framework shows that the intercultural communication competence (ICC) is necessary in regards to language teaching and it is a priority in language learning.

In Colombia, the Ministry of National Education (MEN) created a document called The Basic Standards of Foreign Language Competence: English (*El Reto*) in which, it is explained why Colombian students must become bilingual. Besides, the document states that nowadays the world is characterized by the intercultural communication dialogues, due to the growing scientific and technological advances and processes of internalization. These circumstances pushed the Ministry of education to create a policy which is called *Colombia Bilingüe* where students learn English and the culture of that language, allowing them to become intercultural communicators so as to have access to the new globalized world.

Current research made by Karabinar and Yunuslar (2013) prove that teaching intercultural communication inside the EFL classroom is important by stating that knowing about foreign culture when communicating with people around the world is extremely significant as cultural understanding is required to foster cultural tied communication. Additionally, according to Wintergerst and McVeigh (2011) the definition of culture includes significant features such as the notion of uniqueness, the magnitude of shared norms, values, manners, and an oneness; which allow the students to learn consciously about the culture of each country in order to be a proper intercultural communicator.

According to Hincapié and Rubio (2016) the purpose of their project was to increase intercultural awareness through speaking tasks among fifth graders in primary school, the learners were from 8 to 10 years old, where the information was gathered through classroom observations and journals. On the other hand, contrary to the project from Hincapié and

Rubio (2016), other authors such as Karabinar and Yunuslar (2013) implement their study to attempt to problematize the hypothesis that the development of intercultural competence in the EFL classrooms is determined by teachers' perspective and understanding of culture; the data was collected through questionnaires and interviews to the in-service teachers.

Participants were from three different nationalities: Turkey, England and United States. The results of the first study revealed that it was possible to develop intercultural awareness among young learners. Nevertheless, the lesson plan needs to be carefully planned, the content needs to be appropriate for the children stage, and authentic material needs to be adapted or created. On the other hand, the second study showed that half of the population interviewed believed that increasing intercultural awareness is a remarkable advantage of having intercultural information in foreign language teaching. In addition, all the interviewees agree that teaching about a culture is very helpful tool while teaching a foreign language. One of the aims of our classroom project is that culture teaching is needed so as to effectively communicate between others cultures, furthermore, it helps to expand a deeper view and culture concrete knowledge which is related to what the projects intended to achieve.

One of the points that Costalas (2009) exposes in her article is that in Colombia some private schools have more access to intercultural learning than public schools. These private schools have English teachers from different countries allowing them to be closer to the target foreign culture which is unlikely in public schools due to the little economic support from the government. However, English teachers in public schools can implement interculturalism by letting their students be explorers of foreign cultures, so that they will unconsciously become good intercultural communicators as Wintergerst and McVeigh (2011) say.

To sum up, it is essential to highlight the part that Hymes (1972) played in the development of intercultural communicative competence, the concept was first proposed by him. He moved from the notion of learning grammar, to actually learn how to use it within a communicative event. Intercultural communicative competence is also important in politics which the basis of the society we now recognize. As quoted by Lipponen (2005) the intercultural communicative competence (ICC) is considered a key element for succeeding in intercultural interactions. She said that the members of the European Parliament need to have a wide variety of skills in order to effectively communicate in intercultural settings to be seen as interculturally competent. The statement previously made by Lipponen (2005) shows that it is not only a matter of communicating properly with other people when traveling to different countries, but also that decisions and negotiations made by the high ranks are based on what they believe they know of foreign cultures which is why they need to be intercultural communicators. In regards to studies that have been developed in relation to the development of intercultural communicative competence within the classroom, Moeller and Nugent (2014) stated that in order to successfully become an intercultural communicator the classroom environment is learner-centered; this type of student is interactive, participatory, researcher, discoverer of knowledge and cooperative. The characteristics previously mentioned are of autonomous learners, this autonomy is what is intended to develop in Colombian learners.

Nonetheless, little is known about studies conducted in relation to our circumstances, so it is necessary to put in practice the studies previously made according to the Colombian context. In accordance with Mejia and Agray-Vargas (2014) one of the internalization policies that the country of Colombia operates is to promote a global and intercultural awareness, and foster the understandings of own and other cultures, depend on the interdependence among people and society and respect for pluralism, in order to develop the

intercultural awareness the bases of this is the solidarity and the peaceful coexistence between nations and authentic global citizenship.

Now that the problem is clearly stated, it is necessary to propose a solution that will help both students and teacher to successfully incorporate intercultural communication competence (ICC) into the classroom. First, it is significant to highlight that Hernández and Samacá (2006) cited by Fandiño (2014) claimed that Colombians will probably be tolerant, and respectful towards other cultures since they are members of a culture composed by a blending of ethnicities, and backgrounds. Considering what the author said, it is easy to infer that incorporating intercultural communication in the Colombian context is not going to be complex.

Another important author is Fandiño (2014) who proposed that the focus when teaching English as a foreign language should not be to reach upper proficiency levels. On the contrary, it is necessary for the students to know how to communicate effectively according to the target foreign language norms as long as they recognize their place as members of another culture with a specific cultural framework. In accordance with Costalas (2009) in public Colombian high schools when teaching English the emphasis is mostly on grammar and writing. However, in order to incorporate cultural knowledge during the implementation it was decided to base the activities on cultural information given throughout the session.

The main purpose of this classroom project is to promote cultural awareness in EFL students. As Wintergerst and McVeigh (2011) mentioned in the text, the aim is to raise students and teachers consciousness, through discussions, texts, and videos of different parts of the world that show the variety of values and manners that exist in this planet, that being an intercultural communicator requires some important aspects; one of them, and the most significant, although, there are many cultures, some of them believe are superior to the others.

Learners and teacher need to bear in mind that every culture has unique features that deserve to be respected. In addition, the goal of our project is for different cultures to be learned in a conscious level so as to foster students' higher thinking skills and the way students perceive the world in terms of culture. We want to highlight that Colombia is a pluricultural country which allow the students to be more tolerant and flexible of learning the foreign culture.

Hamers and Blanc (1995) cited by Hernández and Bohórquez (2006) again stated that people can only be aware of their own cultural identity to the extent that they realize the existence of other cultures within or outside their own. Aside from the importance of the inclusion of foreign cultures, students native cultures is the starting point for the successful development of intercultural competence.

Sumaryono and Ortiz, (2004) cited by Fandiño (2014) stated that students and teachers should adapt multiple cultural identities instead of adapting only one. Since the classroom project will not only focus on English speaking cultures, but also in cultures from around the world, both learners and facilitators need to open their minds to new and fresh experiences and lifestyles.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

2.1.1 Teaching objectives:

To increase the teachers' professional development regarding the intercultural communicative competence by looking for distinctive characteristics of the different cultures to be taught.

- To become an explorer whose aim is to guide the students throughout the learning process.

- To adapt some material needed to successfully conduct the intercultural lessons planned.
- To foster higher order thinking skills by investigating about the diversity of each culture in order to appropriately guide students throughout the lessons.

2.1.2 Learning objectives

To recognize different cultures including the native, the target and others and to assimilate those differences in order to become a successful intercultural communicator.

- To recognize and produce short monologues in which the ICC is reflected in the manner of how the student interact in the real life scenarios proposed in class.
- To recognize verbal patterns and nonverbal behaviors from other communities.
- To generate deep conversation shifting from English to Spanish about the features that compose and make unique each culture.

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Lit. Review

Recent research proves that knowing about a foreign culture not only the native one when communicating with people around the world is extremely important as cultural understanding is required to foster cultural tied communication. The connection between language and culture is undeniable. In addition, the definition of culture includes significant aspects such as the notion of uniqueness, the magnitude of shared norms, values, manners,

and oneness. On the other hand, when students learn a language, they undoubtedly learn about a culture and to communicate effectively with different people from other cultures. This is precisely what needs to be implemented in EFL classrooms in order to offer a useful experience for the students.

The present article Karabinar and Yunuslar (2013) attempts to problematize the hypothesis that the development of intercultural competence in the EFL classrooms is determined by teachers' perspective and understanding of culture. The methodologies applied in this research study are qualitative and quantitative, both making use of questionnaires and interviews to the in-service teachers. Participants were from three different nationalities: Turkey, England and United States. They are three Turkish, two British, and one from United States. They have experience language teaching in a range from 3 to 20 years. This inquiry exposes, as a result, how relevant and meaningful the culture is inside of the classroom by saying that teaching culture provides a wider perspective about share norms, values, customs that each culture has made it unique.

The finding of the project showed that the students should know about the foreign culture; taking into account that culture teaching is needed so as to effectively communicate among others cultures. Besides, it helps to gain a deeper view and culture concrete knowledge regarding manners, values and shared norms.

This investigation completed by Karabinar and Yunuslar (2013) is relevant for our classroom project since it analyzes the connection between language and culture so as to give significance to the intercultural competence (IC). Moreover, Bolton (1980) cited by Karabinar and Yunuslar (2013) said that language is not only the fundamental instrument that people use to communicate but also the attachment between the community and their culture. Therefore, one of the main concepts that are required for this research project is "culture". It

is strongly recommended to be aware of student's perception of culture, too. It means that each student co-builds empathy and respect throughout the recognition of both cultures, but it is, first, an identity to, then, becomes an intercultural competence.

The findings of Karabinar and Yunuslar (2013) study showed that the majority of participants did not find the textbook they used sufficient enough to learn the target language; it also proved to be insufficient in terms of developing cultural competence and cultural understanding. The reasons lay behind this inefficiency are stated as too much emphasis on grammar.

Other authors that contribute to this classroom project are Hincapié and Rubio (2016) they state that the purpose of their project was to raise intercultural awareness through speaking tasks among fifth graders in a primary school, the learners were from 8 to 10 years old, also the information of the classroom project was gathered through classroom observations and journals. In order to get the conclusions Hincapié and Rubio (2016) analyzed the results in and on action reflection. The findings of the project were that intercultural communication competence can effectively be introduce to young ESL learners, but the material used during the implementations should be authentic, the lesson needs to be carefully planned, and the material needs to fit learners level and age. Besides, they also found that cultural content that included some similarities and differences between formal and informal American, British, and Colombian forms to greet people, is extremely engaging for the learners. In addition, they learn to respect and understand other cultures; moreover the use of Spanish is not needed during the implementations in order to successfully achieve the goal of the project.

We consider Hincapié and Rubio (2016) project essential for our own classroom project since their goals are extremely similar to what it is intended to accomplish in this

project. One of their conclusions is that students learnt to respect and tolerate others ways of lives lifestyles and way of thinking. This conclusion is related to our project due to the fact that we want to open student's minds and raise their awareness upon the world and how manners, attitudes, and beliefs vary from one place to another, even in their own country. Equal to the research conducted by Karabinar and Yunuslar (2013) they state that teaching culture within a classroom provides an extensive view on other culture's norms and values that have made each culture particular. On the other hand, Hincapié and Rubio (2016) used observations and journals as data collection methods which are the ones we will use throughout our implementations.

The previous research provide many aspects that need to be explained so as to comprehend the spectrum that the culture had. It is necessary to mention that culture also has stereotypes which are rooted in the way students perceive culture through a foreigner creating false premises, taking into account the prior assumption, the purpose of the project is to create a good environment where the students are not defensive with their thoughts but instead of that they are willing to open their minds to diverse cultures.

3.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.2.1 What is culture?

According Ambady (2011) cited by Fandiño (2014) Society, languages and opinions are firmly connected with each other, cooperating in various habits and at unusual degrees, current discoveries from cultural neuroscience advise that culture shapes the cognition and thinking of individuals. He also mentioned that it conditions the rational blueprint that communities employ to judge themselves along with their correlation with others; also it

affects their most elemental cognitive labor including operations like problem solving, object perception, and conversation processing. According to Brislin (1990) cited by Karabinar and Yunuslar (2013) broadly collective notions, principles, hypothesis regarding lifetime, and goal-directed activities to recognize involuntarily as “right and correct” by people that label themselves as representatives of a community.

Fandiño (2014) stated that culture encompasses many aspects that are reflected in one and other such as beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that are intertwined with language, but culture is not a byword for fostering English socio cultural domination or ethnocentrism. Hincapié and Rubio (2016) supply another definition of culture by saying that learning culture has been relevant in language education and intercultural communication inasmuch as there is a big connection between language and culture. Additionally, the author said, culture learning must be defined as the acquisition of culture - specific and culture-general knowledge, plus, attitudes and skills are, surely, embedded since all these previous concepts allow a more appropriate communication among people from outside.

3.2.2 The importance of culture

The intercultural competence is a key element when learning a second language. Even for monolingual people, being bicultural is a key factor in order to successfully build strong ties with people from different places. According to Samovar, Porter, and McDaniel (2009) 6.6 billion people live and share this world. They said that these people come from separate cultural groups and speak different languages. Besides, they stated that nowadays everybody is connected not only via internet, but also on the streets, on their jobs or even in universities where the diversity in cultures, ethnic, and language is wide. In a planet full of people it is

easy to infer that is merely impossible to communicate with each other without having a basic knowledge of other cultures.

Similar to the previous concept, according to Wintergerst and McVeigh (2011) other important aspect about culture is the relationship between body language and nonverbal communication. The authors highlighted that nonverbal communication is everywhere within a culture and it changes between one culture and another. Each culture has different gestures (with different meanings), backchannels, proxemics, and haptic norms according to their manners. This is an important aspect to take into account when interacting with foreigners since misunderstandings mostly occur not because of language barriers, but because of cultural stumbling blocks.

People tend to be biased towards their native culture; this characteristic could lead to serious cultural misinterpretations and close mindedness. Hernández and Samacá (2006) said that to properly interact with people around the world much depends on our own ability to comprehend not only our culture, but also foreign cultures. The authors also pointed out that people who are exposed to unknown environments without the appropriate exposure to the new culture may face unnecessary struggles. Taking this into account is relevant to say that people who are deliberately not exposed to a new culture because of their favoritism, later will probably face numerous struggles trying to adapt to a new way of life. On the other hand, other important aspect to address in this project is cultural awareness, which needs to be clearly defined.

3.2.3 What is cultural awareness?

The term culture is divided into ramifications; one of these is cultural awareness. According to (Tomalin and Stempleski, 1993 in Álvarez and Bonilla, 2009) cited by Cardona and Sarmiento (2015) they state that cultural awareness is “sensitivity to the impact of

culturally-induced behavior on language use and communication” which implies that it is essential to have cultural background in order to effectively use the target language. In addition, Cardona and Sarmiento (2015) explained that cross-cultural covers some aspects that are involved in the culture such as beliefs, norms, values, attitudes, and feelings transmitted not only by language but also by paralinguistic characteristics that are in the way they dress, gesticulate, stance and the body movements. Other feature is developing sensitivity and understanding on the divergences that exist in one culture with another. Besides, they state that qualities such as openness and flexibility in relation to other people are important so as to be conscious in the role of developing cultural awareness.

In order to raise cultural awareness in EFL students, Wintergerst (2011) present the characteristic of being explorer in which the student assume the role and search the differences between their culture and the target one. Additionally, the student will be engaged and motivated to appreciate those disagreements that may not be notorious at first sight, but after becoming an explorer the learner’s perspective changes allowing him the opportunity to be flexible and to reflect upon cultures uniqueness and that these uniqueness must be respected. To appropriately introduce the intercultural communicative competence, it is important to state the advantages of teaching cultural features within the classroom.

3.2.4 Advantages of teaching culture

There are numerous advantages of teaching foreign cultures in the classroom. Hernández and Samacá (2006) stated one of the advantages, according to the authors it is our responsibility as future teachers to develop a sense of cross cultural awareness among our students. They also said that after developing their intercultural competence, students will understand the influence of culture in their learning process. Other important aspect the authors mentioned was that culture can affect students’ personal relationships, social actions,

and the capacity to deal with struggle. With that said, the way that we as future teachers approach this issue will help our students create new relationships. Besides, as teachers we must seek students' wellness which includes their successful adaptation to the world as we know it.

Culture and language are strongly attached, it is impossible to talk about one without including the other. Brdarić (2016) mentioned that it is essential to look into the present of culture when teaching in EFL classrooms due to the fact that its main goal is intercultural communicative competence (ICC), that refers to awareness of practices, manners, and behavior of a community. Therefore, the authors said that in order to accomplish an entire growth in all language learning areas, it is needed to incorporate culture as an essential part of language learning. Culture is indeed needed in education in general. However, speaking of the Colombian context culture is not included in EFL classrooms which do not allow the successful completion of educational training.

In agreement with the previous author Haider (2013) pointed out that a language is a reflection of a certain culture. When learning a language, learners gain consciousness and understanding of the culture in which the language is built in. As stated before, this author highlights that a language cannot be fully learned if students have not dominated the target culture. This is genuinely an advantage of learning culture, successful and complete learning.

3.2.5 How to teach culture?

To begin with, Fandiño (2014) states that authors have discussed many aspects that involve the culture but the most important is the explicit incorporation of culture inside the EFL classroom with the intention to help students to become familiar with the cultural differences. Hernández and Samacá (2006) cited by Fandiño (2014), exposed that Colombians having a huge diversity of ethnicities, backgrounds, and genders within their

own country are more tolerant and respectful with the variation that exist in a culture.

Besides, authors expressed that if the culture is taught explicitly and systematically the learners can enhance qualities such as respect and tolerance that will help them with the familiarization of cultural differences in order to acquire a critical understanding.

In accordance with Fandiño, Wintergerst and McVeigh (2011) explained that some aspects such as beliefs, values, norms, and attitudes are fundamental factors of any culture. Even if the people look exactly the same their interpretations of those assumptions differ from culture to culture. Consequently, Wintergerst and McVeigh (2011), give some suggestions on how the culture can be taught in a conscious level, they propose to begin the class with a discussion where the students are the center (explorer) during the debate since they will be expressing what culture is for them. Moreover, in that way the students will have to think in depth what culture means allowing the development of a critical thinking, taking into account that throughout this process the students identify the differences and similarities between their own culture and the external one.

3.2.6 How to teach culture in the classroom?

First, the hidden points of aspects of culture should be pointed out, features such as gestures, distinctive word attitudes, and behaviors. Wintergerst and McVeigh (2011) propose different activities to create cultural awareness among learners. To begin with, the authors said what is stated before in these projects, people tend to think that their native culture is superior, as a result other cultures or other behavior patterns are unnatural. Considering the statement previously made Wintergerst and McVeigh (2011) present what teachers can do, they can help their students to see that the different traditions and rules of every culture are unique. They suggested that teachers can start by making the invisible aspects of a culture

more accessible. Additionally, their advice is to ask students what aspects they consider important about a culture, the purpose of this activity is to encourage students to make decisions about what matters to them. Besides, this activity could also help teachers to understand how their student's minds work and their thoughts and beliefs.

According to Dai (2011), autonomy is the key in order to become a better learner and teacher; also he explained that it is a must for teachers to foster the collection of the required information through books and internet, students will attempt to use every tool possible in order to gather the knowledge needed themselves instead of waiting until the teacher provides it. Besides, the author suggested for the students to analyze the information in order to select what they consider best fits their cultural topic. Apart from promoting the exchange of cultural information, this activity also encourage learners to be autonomous during their learning process.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Type of practicum

This segment presents the information in relation to our classroom project, which was focused on promoting cultural awareness in the students and in- service teacher. It presents the context, setting, participants, and resources. Some features such as gender, age, profile of learners, and profiles of pre-service teachers are described thoroughly.

4.2 Context and Setting

The selection of the institution we worked in obeyed to practical reasons: nearness of the institution to our homes and certain previous knowledge of the institution due to some pedagogical activities carried out there. This project was carried out at a co-ed public institution which is '*Liceo Bilingüe el Poblado II*', located in '*El Poblado II*' in Pereira

Risaralda, Colombia. The school belongs to a medium socioeconomic¹ level, the school has a media room, a computer lab, a bathroom for the teachers, an administrative office, and a small sports field, also it has 13 classrooms approximately, classes start from 6:30 a.m. and it finishes at 12:45 p.m. . There are some didactic and technological resources such as; speakers, computers, boards, and English books. The school provides 16 monthly hours of English that means 4 hours per week. The institution has 11 teachers and 200 students. The teacher guiding the class is graduated from the English teaching program. Based on the interview with the teacher, the school's pedagogical model is based on the cognitive, humanistic, and social constructivism approaches. This classroom project is implemented in 10th graders and the English curriculum assigned by the school is adapted from the *mallas curriculares*² and matrices. The English subject is taught four hours per week, three times a week.

The project was implemented in two classrooms; one of them is the media room which has a video projector, a fan, speakers, and a computer. However, it does not have chairs while the other is the official classroom with a board, 13 chairs, posters, and pictures of the students and the teachers. The media room was used when the implementers needed to project a video for the lesson while the official classroom of the course was used for the other activities. The illumination of both classrooms was appropriate, but the temperature of the environment was heated. Besides, since there were 13 students, the classrooms were big enough for the population.

¹The Colombian socioeconomic strata can be classified in 6 categories. National Planning explains that the stratification is not done based on household income because those factors are unmanageable for the required stratification. The rules regarding stratification mandate that residential property should be stratified instead of households; stratum 4 (Medium)-for instance- is not a beneficiary of subsidies, nor must it pay extra costs, it pays exactly the value that any service-providing company defines as the cost of providing whatever service.

² La malla curricular is an instrument that contains the design structure in which Colombian teachers approach the knowledge of a specific course, in an articulated and integrated way, allowing an overview of the general structure of an area including: subjects, contents, methodologies, procedures and evaluation criteria that are managed in the classroom.

4.3 Participants

The participants implicated in the project were 13 students from 10th grade (almost at the end one student dropped out) and two pre-service teachers whose detailed descriptions and roles will be given in the next section.

4.3.1 Students

The students involved in the project were 13 students from 10th grade whose ages were from 14 to 17 years old, they came from a medium socioeconomic status. According to the in- service teacher the students had a high English level. Moreover, Piaget (1964) states that learners who are 12 years onwards are in the formal operational stage in which students' possess the ability to reason and respond theoretically, hypothetically, abstractly, and thinking counterfactually. He said that as adolescents enter this stage gain the ability to think in an abstract manner by manipulating ideas in their head, without any dependence on concrete manipulation, so as to the students comprehend and create their own conclusions towards the features that are inside of each culture established for this classroom project.

4.3.2 Pre-service Teachers

There were two pre-service teachers conducting the classroom Project, they are students from the English teaching program at the *Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira* (UTP) subscribed in 8th semester. As stated by Harmer (2007) the prompter role lets the students assume the leading role, work things out for themselves and encourage them forward in a gentle and positive way. Both of the pre-service teachers guided the project, planned the lessons, and adapted material in order to achieve the goals. Both pre-service teachers were in charge of the implementations. Additionally, both reflected upon their experiences through journals and observations.

4.4 Reflection instruments

In this stage, based on the learning objectives, we explain how the practitioners gathered the information from the student's products and performance during the implementation.

4.4.1 Observation

To begin with, the process of collecting data was conducted by the practitioners through observations in order to seek out the students responses such as the student's behavior, how much they were engage with the activities, their participation on the differences of the target culture with their own culture. Besides, so as to accomplish these observations it was necessary to make 10 sessions to gather the information needed. What the practitioners expected with these considerations is to know if the learners understood what was taught and if they liked the topics discussed during the classes. In addition, this allowed the pre-service teachers to see how they could improve the classroom environment and observe if the objectives established were achieved.

4.4.2 Journals

First of all, the journals were employed in 10 sessions by the practitioners, which allowed them to throw back on what went well, what did not go that well and what things should be improved for the next session with the purpose of providing the students the adequate knowledge. Moreover, what practitioners expected with those journals, which were written at the end of the class, was to reflect upon their own performance so as to improve those weaknesses that were implicit in the classroom.

4.4.3 Students Artifacts

In this instrument, student's artefacts were some features such as quizzes, notes, homework, debates and short monologues that were developed by the learners during 10 sessions, which allowed them to acquire basic knowledge about culture in order to be a good intercultural communicators. Besides, those artifacts let the students make use of the knowledge given by the pre-service teachers. To continue with, so as to gather the previous data, the practitioners took photos of the student's written production. Additionally, the pre-service teachers knew if students are responding correctly through active participation in activities and their facial gestures around the topics discussed. Finally, what the pre-service teachers expected with those students artifacts was to examine if the students understood the knowledge of the given topics.

4.5 Instructional Design

During this section, the goal is to contextualize the reader about the steps taken in order to promote cultural awareness through speaking, reading, and listening tasks. A general description on the processes of the implementation will be given. The description of the different stages is based on theories from specialist in the intercultural communication competence field such as: Byram (2014) and Wintergerst and McVeigh (2011). Presentation, practice, and production (PPP) is a three-part teaching process that starts with the presentation stage which is used to elicit the students' knowledge. According to Evans (1999) cited by Maftoon (2012) in the practice stage the teacher helps the learner to gain new linguistic knowledge, in the practice the learner is enveloped in mechanical production and decides how to use the target language, both during the same lesson. The author also highlights that during the production part, the student uses the language in a natural or context activity.

Presentation: According to Maftoon (2012) the facilitator starts the lesson by setting up a situation. Since it is an intercultural lesson, the appropriate way to start is setting up a situation related to the student's native culture in order to contextualize them with the topic the class is focused on. This phase is about presenting the information of a certain country through reading activities and videos so as to help the teacher to guide the students through this and the coming stages.

Practice: As stated by Maftoon (2012) Students practice the new language in a controlled way by matching parts of sentences, completing sentences or dialogues and asking and answering questions using the target language. During this stage there is a variation since the aim of the project is cultural information, the teachers focus more on what the students express about the topic rather than in the target language. Usually the task during this stage is a comparison between the features presented of the foreign and the target culture, this comparison can be done through a diagram, a text, a drawing or any type of activity the students find interesting.

Production: Maftoon (2012) said that learners are encouraged to use the new language in a freer way, either for their own purposes and meanings or in a similar context introduced by the teacher. As for the intercultural lesson, after the students analyze the information, they are encouraged to use it in order to discuss through a debate, model through a role play, or simply argument through a communicative task. Besides, Byrne (1986) cited by Maftoon (2012) insisted that the sequence of the approach does not have to be followed strictly.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Students' responses

Now that students were exposed to videos and speaking activities, they were able to understand the contents of the topics and the language. Based on the information given by the in service teacher, the student's language proficiency level was good in terms of the four linguistic skills. In fact, based on the comprehension demonstrated in the input sessions of class we can asseverate the information given was correct. It is important to highlight that the implementation was conducted in a semi private school with 12 students which is not a real population according to Colombian context, but rather an ideal one. Besides, they constantly made comparison between the target and the native culture as the content was introduced, they also manifested understanding by saying "Entendí", waving their heads, participating while the topics were addressed in English or Spanish, and translating what the pre service teachers said for their peers.

5.1.1 Identifying stereotypes

Regarding the Intercultural Communicative Competence, Karabinar and Yunuslar (2013) stated that the students should know about the foreign culture; taking into account that culture teaching is needed so as to effectively communicate among others cultures. Throughout the project and the implementation the importance of knowing about a different culture was highlighted. As time went by, students started to say that people should be careful and investigate before traveling. However, it was also emphasized that information is important not only when traveling, but also in their daily life. Even when playing video games online or working in a restaurant, people should know how to behave or appropriately communicate in order to have a good interaction and not to offend the others.

During the discussions of the topics given in class, the students had space of interaction in which they could shift from English to Spanish in order to properly express their thought regarding the subject with their peers or the whole group. Additionally, the students identified stereotypes from their native and foreign countries based on the debates produced in class. It is evidenced that most of the times, the students were shocked by the information provided by the teachers, they considered that some rules were extreme or did not make sense; that is the reason why the learners started to connect the foreign cultural information with their routines for a better understanding of unknown customs. These particular situations are shown in the following piece of information taken from **02; SA; 16/03/18**.

During the short pauses of the class, students could be heard talking about this culture due to the fact that they could not believe how different and bizarre German manners and laws are. Likewise, learners linked German manners with their daily life, they imagined how could life be and feel living in such a different society, they also did this exercise during the Korean lesson. The students also mentioned German and Colombian stereotypes. From Germany “Nazis y el lenguaje” they said and from Colombia “Cocaína y prostitutas”. Student A said “Yo estaba jugando un juego en línea y empecé a hablar con un Hindú en inglés, tan pronto le dije que era Colombiano, el me preguntó sobre drogas y Pablo Escobar.

5.1.2 Student's role through the implementation

To begin with, it is essential to remark that the pre- service teacher's job is to formulate a classroom management plan to facilitate the development of an effective learning environment. Nevertheless, the student also has an obligation in the development of a quality learning environment. Moreover, students should be expected to show respect for self and others and meet all behavioral and academic expectations. According to Harmer (2011), the students have the ability to possess and develop characteristics that will help them as

individual and collective entities in the development of a second language and a pleasant classroom environment. However, this work should be encouraged by the teachers. In addition, the author stated that the characteristics that should be promoted in the classroom are tolerance, analyze the presentations of their peers, be willing and accurate guesser, and enhance peer work.

One of the most remarkable characteristic of this course is that the students respect when one of their colleagues were expressing an idea. Besides, it is evidenced that they help each other when some of their classmates are in trouble with some task proposed by the pre-service teachers. For instance, the following paragraph presented one of the previous idea:

O3; FG; 23/03/18. . The topic of that class was *holidays in India*.

El estudiante K el cual es el más tímido de todos, en esta clase estuvo con las baterías recargadas se le notaba que su disposición había mejorado(incluso al principio trató de dar las respuestas en inglés aun cuando se le dificulta y no le gustaba que sus compañeros lo ayudarán, él decía que era capaz y en realidad se le comprendió la idea que quiso compartir) la historia que él quería contar estaba relacionada con una festividad en la cual su tío lo hizo partícipe, él explicaba detalladamente la anécdota y todos sus compañeros mostraron respeto al escuchar lo que este decía.³

Additionally, the learners were capable to bring their previous knowledge to the meaning of a Hindu deity, which helped the class to be pleasant and allowed to the shy students to be brave so as to bringing up their previous knowledge too about religion even if they were wrong they risked making mistakes. As shown in **O3; FG; 23/03/18**.

Hubo un momento en que los estudiantes se sabían los nombres de los dioses o deidades de las personas hindúes, hasta se peleaban para decir el nombre de estos. Un gran ejemplo de esto es el estudiante G el cual comento en la clase el significado que tenía la deidad en forma de elefante; incluso llegó a decir que le parecía que esa

³ Student K, who is the shiest of all, during this class was with the recharged batteries, it was easy to tell that his disposition had improved. (even at the beginning he tried to give the answers in English even though it was difficult for him, he did not like to receive help from his classmates, he said he was capable and in fact the class understood the idea he wanted to share) the story he wanted to tell was related to a celebration in which his uncle made him participate. He explained in detail the anecdote and all his companions showed respect by listening to what he said (Our own translation).

religión era muy calmada y que la personas que pertenecían a esa religión eran muy devotas casi parecidas a los Colombianos.⁴

5.1.3 Promoting debates with their peers

At the beginning, there was a need to contextualize students with the concept of Interculturality due to the fact that they were not aware of the meaning of it. Native cultural features that the students recognized were used as an example to contextualize the students with the term “interculturality” which they seemed to understand taking into consideration their gestures and expressions. The students expressed their comprehension of cultural differences and respect towards the other way of thinking and behaving by discussing with their classmates every fact that they considered curious about the country addressed in each class. Based on Harmer (2011), getting students to speak or debate in the classroom can sometimes be extremely easy but this issue depend if the class had a good atmosphere, the learners who get on with each other, and appropriate English level, will often participate freely if we provide them a proper topic or task.

The debates turn out as a response to the presentation of videos and readings in which the pre- service teachers ask them questions about the topic already presented and the debate arises or thoughts disagreements. For that reason, the facilitators sometimes allow the students to be the stakeholders or take the floor during the debates in this way the learners learnt to respect when their peer is talking. The evidence is reflected in this fragment: **J3; SA; 23/03/18.**

Cuando fue su turno de hablar, student E dijo “Me gustaría ir al Diwali por las luces, me parece muy bonito y tiene un muy buen significado” Student G dijo que le gustaría ir al Diwali o al Holi, porque son festivales llenos de vida y el Holi es como un color run. Student B pregunto “Esos colores también son artificiales como los de acá?” a lo

⁴ There was a time when the students knew the names of Hindu gods or deities, they even argued to say their names. A great example of this is student G, who commented on the meaning of the deity with the elephant form, said that he thought that religion was very calm, he also said that people who belonged to that religion were very devoted, almost like Colombians. (Our own translation)

que student A contestó “Los colores que ellos utilizan son hechos de alimentos y harina de arroz” los estudiantes parecían asombrados porque los polvos son naturales y no contaminan mientras se celebra la festividad.⁵

Additionally, they imagined scenarios where cultural factor of other countries applied here in their native country which allowed them to internalize more the unknown rules and understand them more. On the other hand, given the fact that videos were used in order to facilitate the learning process. As shown in **O2; SA; 16/03/18**.

When the part of the German expression for “cheers” played, students A, E, and F started to act as if they had glasses and said the word “Prost”. Additionally, what Student A and G replied “todo eso es cultural”, the learners made up situations in which the German manners applied here in Colombia and they laughed.

5.1.4 Motivation

In order to motivate students to participate, to have an active role in the learning process instead of a passive one, the teachers had to make sure to build a trusting and respectful relationship with the students. The idea was for the students to feel the pre- service teachers concern regarding their educational process. As Harmer (2011) stated, when learners feel that the instructor have little interest in them (or is not prepared to treat them with respect or consideration), they will have little reasons to prevail encouraged, but when the teacher is caring and supportive, they are much more likely to keep an interest in what is going on, and as a consequence, their self-esteem (an essential element for success) is likely to be raised.

⁵ When it was his turn to speak, student E said "I would like to go to Diwali because of the lights, it seems very nice and it has a very good meaning" Student G said he would like to go to Diwali or Holi, because they are festivals full of life and the Holi is like a color run. Student B asked "Are these colors artificial as well as those here?" To which student A replied "The colors they use are made of food and rice flour" the students seemed amazed because the powders are natural and do not pollute while celebrating the festival. (Our own translation)

At the beginning the students did not participate in the activities that required them to use their speaking skill. However, the mood in the classroom changed when the teachers asked them for understanding. After the situations were clarified, the learners started to actively participate and to ask whenever they had questions regarding the topic. Additionally, they talked to their peers about the different situations shown in the class as evidenced in **O1; FG; 09/03/18**.

La facilitadora comenzó su clase en inglés pero en vista de que alguno de ellos la miraban algo raro, ella hizo la siguiente pregunta: chicos ustedes si están comprendiendo lo que estoy diciendo? a lo que el estudiante B, estudiante C y estudiante D respondieron: “Profe nosotras solo le entendemos unas cosas pero de resto estamos algo pérdidas” este acontecimiento llevó a que la profesora hablara en inglés y en español al mismo tiempo, este cambio hizo que la disposición de los estudiantes cambiará ya que los estudiante C y D dijeron: “ Profe ahora si le comprendo lo que usted está hablando y ya de esa manera puedo participar en clase”. Además sus propios compañeros los ayudan a entender ya que siempre están en constante intercambio de ideas sobre el tema establecido (Korea).⁶

This can also be seen in **O3; FG; 23/03/18**

El estudiante K el cual es el más tímido de todos, en esta clase estuvo con las baterías recargadas se le notaba que su disposición había mejorado(incluso al principio trató de dar las respuestas en inglés aun cuando se le dificulta y no le gustaba que sus compañeros lo ayudarán, él decía que era capaz y en realidad se le comprendió la idea que quiso compartir) la historia que él quería contar estaba relacionada con una festividad en la cual su tío lo hizo partícipe, él explicaba detalladamente la anécdota y todos sus compañeros mostraron respeto al escuchar lo que este decía.

⁶ The facilitator started her class in English but since some of the students were looking at her strangely, she asked the following question: Do you guys understand what I am saying? Student B, student C, and student D replayed: "We only understand some things, but we are somewhat lost". The teacher began to speak in English and Spanish at the same time, this changed the student's disposition. Students C and D said: "Teacher now that I understand what you are talking about, I can participate in class". In addition their classmates help them understand since they are always exchanging ideas of the topic (Korea). (Our own translation)

5.1.5 Student's previous knowledge

Before starting the implementations the in-service teachers expected the students to have a vague idea of what is culture. Besides, they also expected them to have general knowledge of the different cultures chosen for the project. Since there are common stereotypes related to specific cultures, they were helpful in order to compare the student's knowledge before and after the classes. As started by Choudhury (2014). Culture is the characteristics of a particular group of people, defined by everything from language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts, also cultures are what make countries unique, each country has different cultural activities, cultural rituals, beliefs, and values of the people in that culture.

As classes went by, the in-service teachers confirmed that there were stereotypes known by the students. However, during the class of Indian and Colombian celebrations, the learners showed their knowledge regarding the Indian religion; they mentioned characteristics of the different festivals and even indicated the names of popularly known Hindu deities. The learner's participation showed their interests vary. Therefore, it is essential to take their previous knowledge into account when planning a lesson. This situation is evidenced in **O3**;

FG; 23/03/18

Hubo un momento en que los estudiantes se sabían los nombres de los dioses o deidades de las personas Hindús, hasta se peleaban para decir el nombre de estos. Un gran ejemplo de esto es el estudiante G el cual comento en la clase el significado que tenía la deidad en forma de elefante; incluso llegó a decir que le parecía que esa religión era muy calmada y que la personas que pertenecían a esa religión eran muy devotas casi parecidas a los Colombianos.

5.2 Professional growth

5.2.1 Material design

During the planning of the classes, it was evident that the material needed could not be found online or in textbooks. As stated by Howard and Major (2004) a key criticism of commercial materials is that they are not aimed at any specific group of learners or any particular cultural or educational context. In fact, the material found online and in textbooks was not appropriate for the project's purpose, population, and the lessons design. Therefore, the material used needed to be created or adapted. Pre-service teachers searched information related to the specific culture of the lesson and create the worksheets needed alongside the activities.

In the classroom project the introduction of the content was fundamental for the proper development of the debates. Sometimes the theory could be introduced through worksheets, but sometimes through videos. For example, the first implementation focused on Korea's table manners which were divided by the pre-service teachers into 13 stages, the worksheet contained an explanation of the importance of these mannerisms, the 13 stages, and an image of how a meal looks in Korea. As shown on **J1; SA; 09/03/18**

Decidí llevar como refuerzo una worksheet en la que los se presentaban costumbres coreanas a la hora de comer, incluyendo gestos o frases populares.⁷

Adapted material can be also be evidenced in **J4; SA; 06/04/18**. The topic of the lesson was dances around the world.

⁷ I decided to use a worksheet in order to reinforce Korean knowledge about customs that are presented at lunchtime, including gestures or popular phrases. (Our own translation)

Repartí a los estudiantes una hoja en la que podían ver la historia de los bailes y datos curiosos de estos, empecé con el video de los bailes coreanos que eran hechos con abanicos⁸

5.2.2 Providing rapport

In this project the classroom environment and relationship between teachers and students was indispensable for the development of the implementations. Minus the respect and willingness to listen others points of view without judging their opinions, the project would not have had the impact accomplished. Jorgenson (1992), Frisby and Martin (2010), and Coupland (2003) cited by Dyrenforth (2014) argue that building rapport can have assertive effects on the classroom environment, it can reduce anxiety, rise students participation, and promote social interaction, foster a positive learning environment, and increase learning. Without the environment we wanted to create, it was going to be complicated to make the students talk or to make them interested in the activities and topic in general. As stated by Brookfield (2006) cited by Dyrenforth (2014) trust between students and teachers is the glue that ties educational relationships together, not trusting teachers have several consequences for the students, they avoid risks and they keep their concerns private.

Before starting the implementations, it was clear that both teachers wanted to create a good collaborative environment in which students could feel free to say and ask whatever they wanted to, in order to do so the first class was essential to cause a good first impression and to establish rapport. As shown on **J1; SA; 09/03/18**.

La primera impresión es demasiado importante y me gustaría que ellos me pudieran ver más como una persona con la que pueden contar a como un figura de autoridad.⁹

⁸ I gave the students a worksheet in which they could see the history and curious facts of dances, I started with the video of the Korean dances that are made with fans. (Our own translation)

⁹ The first impression is very important and I would like them to see me more as a person they can count on than as an authority figure. (Our own translation)

Rapport between the students and teachers made the classes fun and pleasant to teach. As stated by the previous authors and shown on the student's response results, rapport really impacted students behavior and willingness to participate.

5.2.3 Teaching strategies

The aim of the implementations and the project was for the students to comprehend cultural differences and accept them. Therefore, for the pre-service teachers the teaching of English as a second language was not as important as the understanding the intercultural communicative competence. According to their experience learning English, most of the time instead of focusing on the content, students tend to focus on the language structure or if they do not understand, they abstain of participating. According to Thomson (2012) Individual teacher beliefs, their education and experience of teaching, the language levels of learners and the types of interaction in the classroom that take place between the teacher and student are all aspects that may contribute to the types of language that teachers use and the strategies and techniques they choose to employ in the classroom.

During the implementations the pre-service teachers wanted the students to shift from English to Spanish if necessary due to the fact that the level of the students was ambiguous, some students had B1/B2 level while the other had A1/A2. One of the strategies implemented by the teachers was to ask the students if they understood every time someone spoke English in the classroom. As evidences in the next piece of information taken from one of the class observations O1; FG; 09/03/18.

La facilitadora comenzó su clase en inglés pero en vista de que alguno de ellos la miraban algo raro, ella hizo la siguiente pregunta: chicos ustedes si están comprendiendo lo que estoy diciendo? a lo que el estudiante B, estudiante C y estudiante D respondieron: “Profe nosotras solo le entendemos unas cosas pero de resto estamos algo pérdidas” este acontecimiento llevó a que la profesora hablara en

inglés y en español al mismo tiempo, este cambio hizo que la disposición de los estudiantes cambiará ya que los estudiante C y D dijeron: “ Profe ahora si le comprendo lo que usted está hablando y ya de esa manera puedo participar en clase.

As evidenced here, the strategy the teacher used worked since the students understood the content and changed their attitude towards the class.

One of the strategies implemented in this classroom project by the two pre service teachers was the warm up stage, so as to present the topic to the students in different ways with the purpose to let them know what the class will be about. Based on an article by Harmer (2011), the warm up should be fun since raises energy levels on the learners. In addition, fun activities produce relaxed, less inhibited students, and created a positive atmosphere to practice and experiment with the language.

Throughout the process of the implementation of the degree project the warm up stage was present on each class. For instance, at the beginning of the sixth class one of the pre service teachers introduce the topic with a certain activity as shown in **J6; FG; 04/05/18**.

Comencé esta clase con otra actividad como las que me gusta hacer y es adivinando el tema de la clase por medio de palabras en las cuales debían de encontrarle otro sinónimo además ahí se trabaja vocabulario con los estudiantes , ya que lo hace un poco más complejo para ellos y de esa manera un abrebocas para la clase. Comencé poniendo palabras como ring, diferente lenguaje, boyfriend plus girlfriend y de esa manera ellos cogieron el tema de la clase, el cual sería estereotipo entre un matrimonio musulmán y un judío.¹⁰

5.2.4 New knowledge

During the creation of the material and the lesson plans, the pre-service teachers found interesting information about the cultures studied for the project, by doing so they got rid of stereotypes commonly known about these cultures. The lessons had more probability to

¹⁰ I started this class with another activity like the ones I like to do and it is by guessing the subject of the class by means of words in which they should find a synonym. Besides, with this activity we are working on vocabulary. I began writing words like “ring”, “different language”, “boyfriend plus girlfriend” and that is how they guessed the subject of the class, which was stereotypes between a Muslim and a Jew marriage. (Our own translation)

be neutral instead of having the teachers biased perspective. As Hernández and Samacá (2006) said, in order to appropriately interact with people from other parts of the world, it is important to comprehend not only our culture, but also foreign cultures. The same applies for teaching, to properly teach cultural subjects, the pre-service teachers needed to learn as much as possible from other cultures to successfully teach without negative influences.

Before each class both teachers searched content related to the country of the week and its culture. Even when the teachers had to compare information between others countries and their native country (Colombia), they found that there was information of their country that they did not know. As shown in **J3; SA; 23/03/18**.

Mientras estaba investigando para esta clase, me di cuenta de que las festividades hindúes están normalmente llenas de positivismo y de color, además todas tienen un significado ancestral relacionado con una gran variedad de dioses y con su función sagrada. Las festividades colombianas también están llenas de significado y vi algunas que no conocía, no sabía que el carnaval del diablo, no es un diablo religioso, ni es una fiesta anticristiana, toda la vida pensé que celebraban al diablo, porque él es la figura principal del carnaval.¹¹

As stated there, the pre-service teacher had a wrong idea of the reason behind the name of one of the celebrations of her country, since she inform herself, she did not made the mistake of teaching off base information. Additionally, she gains new knowledge.

5.2.5 Teachers role

With proper roles the pre service teachers could increase the cultural awareness in this classroom project, since it was essential to create a pleasant atmosphere and good rapport

¹¹ While I was searching the information for this class, I realized that the Hindu festivities are usually full of positivism and color, they all have an ancestral meaning related to a great variety of gods with their sacred function. The Colombian festivities are also full of meaning and I saw a few that I did not know. I did not know that *el carnaval del diablo* (well known colombian festivity), is not a religious devil, nor is it an anti-Christian party, all my life I thought that they celebrated the devil, because he is the main figure Of the carnival. (Our own translation)

with the learners. For instance, according to Senior (2006) cited by Harmer (2007) the way the teacher walks and act in the room at the start of the first lesson the students would be able to pick up the information. Additionally, Rogers (1961) cited by Harmer (2007) stated that the way the facilitators dress, the stance they adopt and their attitude to the class make an immediately impression on learners. Finally, the point is that the pre service teachers would be able to adopt variety roles in the classroom which facilitate learning. Some of the roles are innate in the facilitators while others have to be worked on.

Before the implementations of the project, the pre service teachers stipulated what would be the roles that they would employ with the students, which were: Prompters, observers, and designers with the purpose to allow the learners to be the center of the classroom while the facilitators guide their work. Based on an observation taken from **O4; FG; 06/04/18**.

Los videos iban acompañados de una lectura la cual fue adaptada por las facilitadoras con el fin de hacer más amena y práctica la lectura, en la cual había partes en español y otras en inglés.¹²

In the next paragraph it is evidence the prompter role of the pre service teacher in the classroom. As shown in **J5; FG; 13/04/18**. The topic of the lesson was the things that the women in Saudi Arabia cannot do.

Proseguí con una actividad de comparar la cultura colombiana con la de arabia saudita y fue ahí cuando proyecte en PowerPoint unas imágenes, con el fin de que ellos pudieran realizar las oraciones con los conectores de contraste y comparación. Durante la actividad estuve caminando alrededor de los puestos de los chicos con el fin de ayudarlos si necesitaban de mi ayuda.¹³

¹² The videos were accompanied by a reading which was adapted by the facilitators in order to make the exercise more enjoyable, in which there were parts in Spanish and others in English. (Our own translation)

¹³ I continued with an activity of comparing the Colombian culture with Saudi Arabia culture. I projected some images in PowerPoint, so that the students could make sentences with the contrast and comparison connectors. During the activity I was walking around their seats in order to help them if they needed my help. (Our own translation)

5.2.6 Recognition of students' needs

From the first class, the pre - service teachers based on a need analysis through observations and direct questions to the learners could appreciate that there were some basic students' needs in which they must supply with some strategies. According to an article by Chostelidou (2010), it is important to conduct a need analysis since in order to seek those needs that the students must had during a class or an intervention with the purpose to provide them a focused classes in terms of interculturality. Besides, the author stated that the recollection of the need analysis data throughout student's questionnaires and interviews provide rich insights into their perceived needs as a learners and as language users.

At the beginning of the project, the facilitators settle down what would be the topics to be discussed during the implementations. However, the learners expressed that they would like to work with other countries. Taking into account the student's needs, the pre service teachers agreed to change two countries from those stipulated by them, since those changes did not affect the project procedure; on the contrary, the initiative of the students seemed pleasant. As shown in **J2; FG; 16/03/18**.

Ellos en la clase de Corea comentaron que les gustaría saber cosas sobre Alemania ya que era una de las culturas que más le llamaban la atención, así que tuve eso como referencia y quise buscar un tema interesante el cual fue: 10 cosas que no debes hacer cuando visitas Alemania, busque que los videos fueran explícitos e idóneos para el nivel de inglés del salón. Además busque el porqué de las cosas que aparecían en el video con el fin de ser más explícita en las explicaciones.¹⁴

In the following paragraph it is evidence that one of the pre - service teacher wanted to know what opinions the students have regarding the themes and methodologies of the project, so as to improve it in the next implementations. As shown in **O7; FG; 11/05/18**.

¹⁴ The students in the class of Korean customs said that they would like to know things about Germany since it was one of the cultures that caught their attention the most. I took their suggestion into account, so I wanted to find an interesting topic. The topic I found was; 10 things you should not do When you visit Germany, I looked for an explicit and suitable video according to the English level of the students. Besides, I researched extra information in order to be more explicit and give a better explanation. (Our own translation)

Al comienzo de la clase, la facilitadora Stefany les pregunta a los estudiantes que hagan un círculo entre ellos con el propósito de hablar sobre cómo les ha parecido las implementaciones y que tan educativas ha sido para ellos los temas tratados en las clases con ambas facilitadoras, al mismo tiempo se les pidió que por favor expresaran si en algún momento se sintieron mal por un comentario de sus propios compañeros o de las facilitadoras. La respuesta de los estudiantes ante aquellas preguntas fueron: Estudiante B: Algunas veces no comprendemos lo que las profesoras explican, sin embargo los videos que traen lo hace mucho más claro.

5.3 Linguistic outcomes

5.3.1 Role plays.

To begin with, before the classroom project was implemented the pre - service teachers established that the use of the role plays in certain classrooms would be something that will allow the learners to expose what they have learned in a dynamic way so as to examine the student's progress towards cultural awareness. Based on Harmer (2011), the role play is one of the prepared talks category in which the students have the opportunity to prepare and rehearse their performance. Besides, this can often be done by getting them the chance to make it in pairs or in groups. Finally, the author stated that the employment of the role - play in the classroom could be used to encourage general oral fluency or to train learners for specific situations also this strategy let them to be creative with their performance.

During the fourth class the students were be able to conclude their presentations since in their previous one they could not. The purpose with that role play was to see if the students understood the things that should not be done in Germany and at the end of each presentation their partner should guess what the characteristic was. For instance, the students A and H performed the Nazi symbol in which they used the elements present in the video and in the explanations given by the facilitator Fabiana. In addition they did it in a respectful way,

making clear and demonstrating the development in their tolerance and leaving aside those stereotypes. As shown in **O4; FG; 06/04/18**.

El estudiante H dijo: "Hey, bro please here in Germany do not make the nazi symbol, we are not proud of that event" Se es consciente de que hay estudiantes con un mejor manejo de la lengua extranjera como lo es el estudiante A ya que el emplea unas conexiones gramaticales un poco más elevadas para el nivel que el salón en general posee, es por tal motivo que él ayudó a su compañero a la hora de la presentación, haciéndolo de una manera respetuosa.¹⁵

The previous idea is also evidenced in **O4; FG; 06/04/18**. However, the learners F and I made a funny and humorous presentation, because instead of thinking they were in Germany they used it in our Colombian context, making the differences between both countries a little more explicit, their grammatical structures were used in the present time also they had some errors, nevertheless, the message they wanted to convey was made in the appropriate way.

El estudiante F dijo: " Hey bro! Here in Colombia we not put out the shoes in other houses" a lo que el estudiante I responde: "Oh man, sorry".¹⁶

In order to provide another piece of evidence; the student J who was to shy during the implementations in this class she was so dynamic. As shown in **O4; FG; 06/04/18**.

The student J exposed this phrase: "In Germany we not late"

So as to continue with the use of the role plays in the following paragraph is evidence (**O6;SA;04/05/18**) how the students prepared their talks in pairs towards the 10 things women in Saudi Arabia still cannot do. Besides, at the end of each presentation the students expressed what they thought about that.

¹⁵ Student H said: "Hey bro! please, here in Germany do not make the nazi symbol, we are not proud of that event" It is evident that there are students with a better use of the foreign language as student A. He uses grammatical connections a little higher for the level that the classroom in general possesses, that is why he helped his partner at the time of the presentation, doing it in a respectful way. (Our own translation)

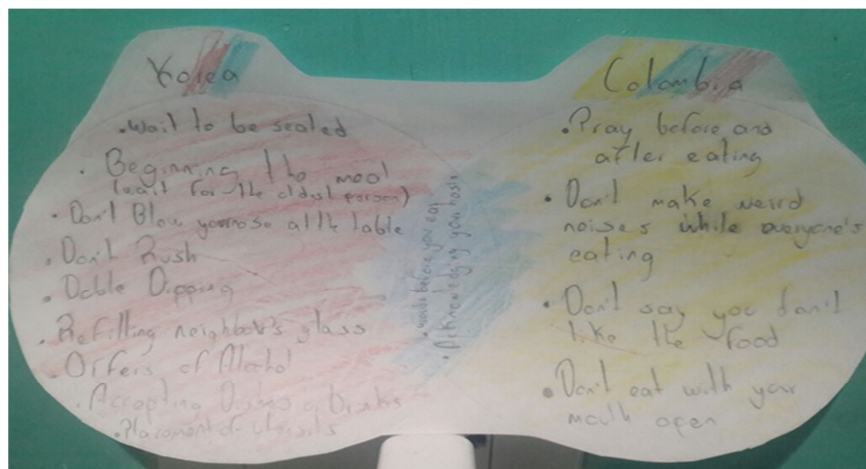
¹⁶ Student F said: "Hey bro! here in Colombia we do not put out the shoes in other houses "to which the student I respond:"Oh man, sorry ". (Our own translation)

The student C said to the student H: “Husband, can I drive? I need to go to the kids”. Then, the student H asked: “Yes... but you only have 40 minutes”.

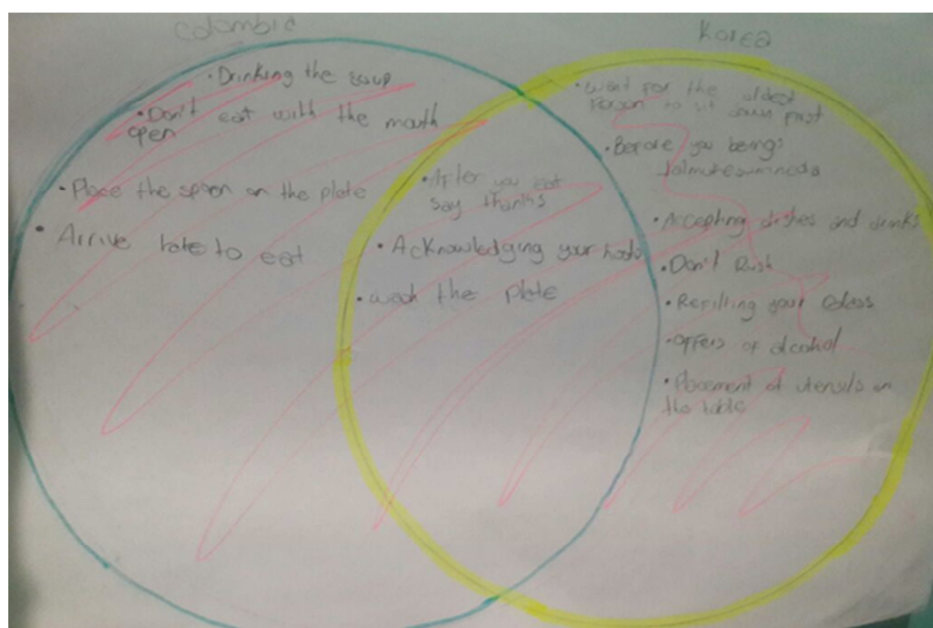
5.3.2 Cultural knowledge in written outcomes

The pre-service teachers established prior the implementation that in order to check student’s progress, it was necessary to collect the tasks assigned throughout the course to analyze the information written by the learners. As stated by Harmer (2004) writing is used as an aide memoire or practice instrument to help learners practice and work with language they have been studying; for example, ask a class to write five sentences using five of the new words or phrases they have been learning. So as to verify student’s cultural knowledge, they had to write different sentences comparing the native and target (according to the lesson) cultures.

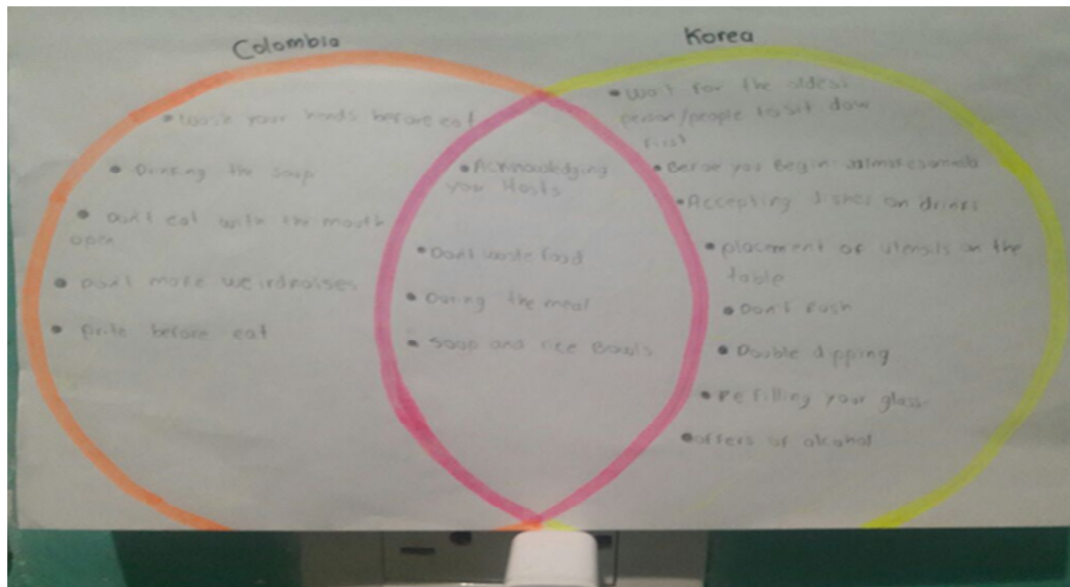
During the implementations the pre-service teachers asked students to compare the given information of the different cultures studied through role plays, Venn diagrams, and comparative texts. The students wrote what they learnt or considered the most shocking characteristics of each culture. As evidenced in **Art1; SA; 09/03/18** that belongs to **student G** (below). The students were asked to create a Venn diagram, they had to write the cultural features of Korea in one side and the cultural features of Colombia in the other side while in the middle they placed the similarities of both countries according to the information provided in the class.



This is also evidenced in Art2; SA; 09/03/18 that belongs to **students B**



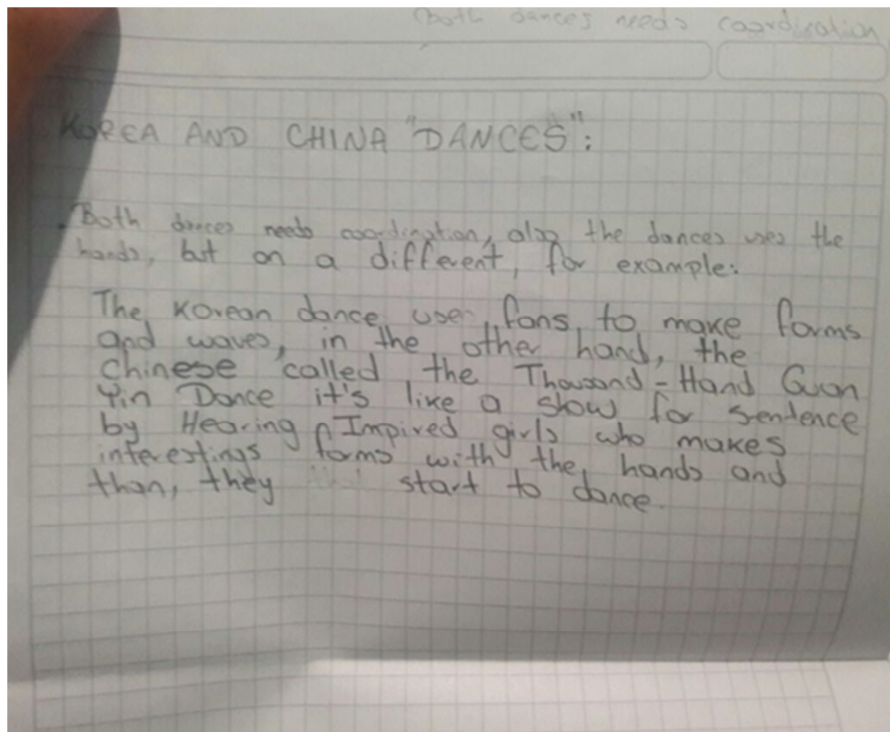
This can also be seen in **Art3; SA; 09/03/18** that belongs to **students L**



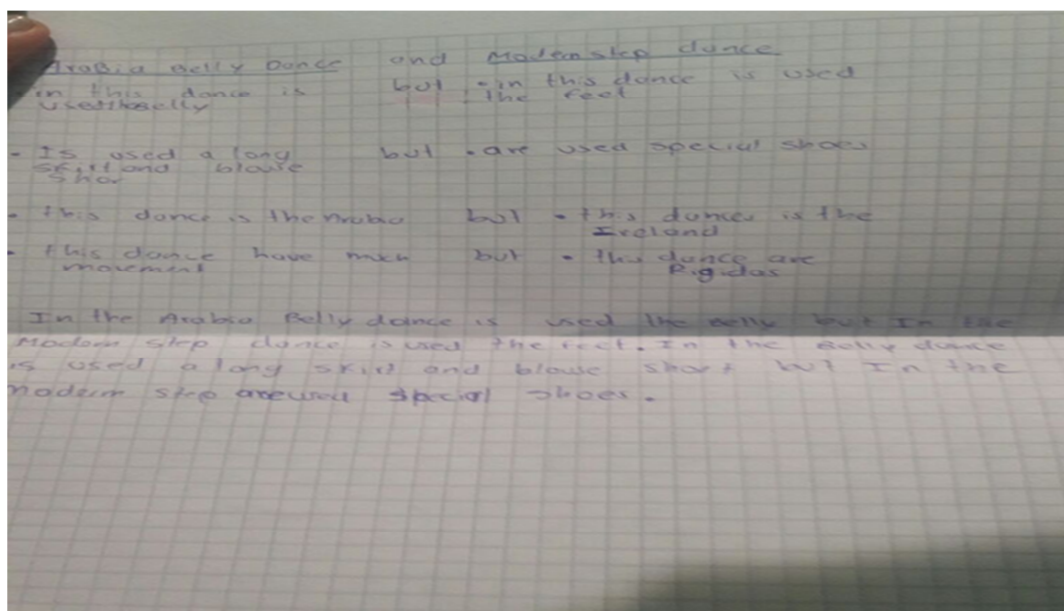
Linguistic outcomes were also manifested during lesson number 4. The lesson presented 5 dances from different parts of the world, their characteristics, and their story. The students had to write a paragraph comparing two dances (of their choice) using the connectors presented in the class, the information provided by the facilitator, and the worksheet given at the beginning of the class. This is demonstrated in **Art6; SA; 06/04/18** written by **students H and I**

Ireland	Africa - Ghana
Irish dance in its current form developed from various influences such as french quadrilles and english dancing throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, dance was taught by travelling dance masters across Ireland throughout this period.	la danza se originó en sus de Ghana a fines de 1450 y principios de 1460 entre la gente Ga de ad y sus alrededores

This can also be seen in **Art8; SA; 06/04/18** written by **students E and F**



Lastly, the linguistic outcome is as well displayed in **Art10; SA; 06/04/18** written by **students B and L**



6. Limitations of the project

During the implementation of this classroom project there were some limitations important to mention that affected the results previously shown. The following situation can be considered when carrying out future projects. To begin with, the background knowledge of the English language and population of this project are not similar to the real Colombian context.

Nowadays, Colombian classrooms have from 30 to 40 students per classroom with an A1 or A2 level. Nevertheless, this classroom project was implemented with 12 students, who had been constantly exposed to the English language, this was necessary due to the fact that the content to promote intercultural awareness were done in English. If this same project was carried out in a Colombian classroom with more than 30 learners, the results would have been likely to be different. Even though, most of the students had a good English proficiency level, a second limitation for developing the intercultural competence was that it was necessary to translate most of the times the information or comments made by certain students because some learners were in a different English level compared to the others.

7. Pedagogical implications

To begin with, one of the most remarkable pedagogical implications is that the pre- service teachers must be familiar with interculturality in terms of how the topics will be presented to students, how the learners interact with it and how the pre- service teachers are going to assessed them taking into account the students English level, needs, age and preferences. The second one, is how the role of the teacher determine in certain aspects the classroom atmosphere since those roles likes prompters, designers, and facilitators allowed the students to comprehend the intercultural competence through catching materials, gestures, body language, and debates in which the students are able to compare or contrast one culture to

another one. Finally, it is significant that at the beginning of the implementation the pre-service teachers have rapport with the in-service teacher so as to share students previous knowledge, their background, any learners with special needs, any disciplinary problems; and their English level.

8. Conclusions

The purpose of this classroom project was to promote intercultural awareness; the goal was achieved thanks to the learner's open-minded setting that helped them understand the differences between cultures without judging even the most uncommonly known things. However, during the last class, it was evident that there is a strong prejudice or disgust towards the indigenous groups of their native country caused by the ignorance of their story and culture. Sadly, the last class was not enough to erase that stereotype the students had against that certain culture. Therefore, we believe that in future projects there should be emphasize in the Colombian groups before teaching or introducing foreign ones.

In addition, in our point of view, this classroom project allowed us to explore and learn new aspects of interculturality, and clarify some stereotypes that we had. Since, even if we were the pre-service teachers we also have some misunderstood conceptions about other cultures. For that reason, so as to clarify those students misunderstanding too, the pre-service teachers looked for where those stereotypes came from and correct them with the purpose to leave behind those bad cultural references. Besides, the facilitators adapted the materials and seek that the videos presented be easy to understand, taking into consideration that not all the learners have the same English level.

Throughout the implementation of the project it was evident that the use of only the English language was not appropriate for the goals set for this project. Since the students had different English levels, it was necessary to translate the first classes. However, by the end of the implementations, the classes were carried mostly in Spanish (the student's native language). At the beginning, the students did not understand every single word, but due to their ability to grasp meaning based on intonation, gestures, facial expression, body language, and actions they guessed the words. The lessons took more time than planned and some students lost their concentrations due to the fact that they understood everything the teacher said at first that is the reason why the pre-service teachers decided to translate when the learners seemed lost. On the other hand, during the implementations it was noticeable that the students liked more the speaking activities and debates more than the written activities which helped us adapt the lessons according to what they liked the most.

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